Aesthetic Changes of Audiovisual Language in China Opera Movies from The Legend of the White Snake to The Legend of the White Snake. Love

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Abstract
Background: Under the background of different times, facing the situation of great changes in public aesthetics, the purpose of this paper is to explore the use of audio-visual language that conforms to the characteristics of the times to create China drama film stories that conform to the current aesthetic characteristics.

Methods: The traditional Chinese opera films "The Legend of the White Snake" and "The Legend of the White Snake. Love" with the same theme in different times in China were selected, and the differences of the same theme and the same story using different narrative methods and audio-visual expressions in different times were compared by the method of analysis and comparison.

Results: With the development of the times, the aesthetic appreciation of the audio-visual language of China opera films has changed; 1) the visual promotion of popular aesthetic habits in story narration, 2) the blending of scenes with blank artistic conception, 3) the scientific and technological appeal of spiritual impact, and 4) the application of Chinese and western elements that arouse the audience's empathy.

Conclusion: The research shows that the aesthetic appreciation of audio-visual language in different times plays a comprehensive role in China's opera films: accurately realizing the integrity of narrative elements, smooth emotional transmission, vivid artistic style arousing the audience's emotions and maintaining this kind of spiritual perception, inducing the audience to fully integrate into the drama stories, expanding the expression mode of opera films, exploring the specific presentation paradigm of opera films, and finally helping the promotion and popularization of traditional art in China.

Keywords: audio-visual language; White snake biography; Movies; Aesthetic evolution
1 Introduction

Opera has a long history in the development of China's films. China's first film, Dingjun Mountain, is a visual reproduction of Peking Opera repertoire. In the long history of China's film development, the prosperity and decline of traditional Chinese opera films are obvious. Every development of opera is driven by two factors: policy and market. Because of its unique artistic form and expressive force, opera has a natural advantage in the spread of opera culture, so the creation of opera films has fertile soil for development at present. In the 32nd China Film Golden Rooster Award in 2019, opera film's "The Woman Picking the Mountain" won the Best opera film Award for her brand-new film concept, creating a new way for the creation of opera films; In 2020, opera film's "Zhenguan Shengshi", the best award in the 33rd China Film Golden Rooster Award, "closely combines the wonderful classical oriental opera art with the modern advanced 3D panoramic sound, film and television technology"[1], which provides a new attempt for the technical renewal of opera films. Subsequently, many different kinds of opera films, such as Cao Cao and Yang Xiu of Beijing Opera, The West Chamber of Shaoxing Opera, Romance of Liu Yi, and Legend of White Snake of Guangdong Opera, appeared in China and other major international film festivals, which brought market popularity to opera films, and they are gradually stepping into the road of prosperity and revival. The prosperity of the film market has also created a good environment for spreading and developing the traditional culture of China opera.

White Snake, which was released on May 20th, 2021, is the first 4K Cantonese opera panoramic sound film in China. It reorganizes the story and spirit of the traditional Cantonese opera "The Legend of the White Snake", takes "love" as the main narrative line, and shows the stand experience of different characters born for love and fighting for love with an objective lens, which perfectly blends traditional art with modern science and technology. The Story of the White Snake, Love, changed the old story into a new one, which not only retained the subtleties of traditional Cantonese opera, but also made an innovation of the times, won the enthusiasm of the vast number of young audiences, and provided valuable experience for inheriting and carrying forward the traditional opera culture and broadening the transmission ways and means of opera. Among the numerous opera films, there are not a few films based on The Legend of the White Snake, among which the Peking Opera film The Legend of the White Snake filmed by Shanghai Film Studio in 1980 has the greatest influence. On the basis of keeping the artistic features of the original script unchanged, it adds the artistic expertise of the film, and adopts live shooting and special effects production, which has become a benchmark work in traditional Chinese opera films and is still a classic in the eyes of the older generation of audiences.
2 Methods

In this paper, the 1980 version of the opera film The Legend of the White Snake and the 2021 version of the opera film The Legend of the White Snake are compared and analyzed from the angle of audio-visual language, and the manifestations of the two films are analyzed in detail. In recent years, in the study of China opera films, many artistic means and themes of opera films have been analyzed. However, there are few literatures that study the audiovisual language of opera films alone, and there are few studies that compare the differences between opera films with the same themes. How to balance the aesthetic needs of current viewers and the accurate expression of traditional opera art by opera films is the focus of the development of opera films. Comparing the differences in the use of audiovisual language in opera films with the same theme in different times is beneficial to open up a better way for the presentation paradigm of China opera films. The 1980 edition of The Legend of the White Snake and the 2021 edition of The Legend of the White Snake, Love, have made cinematic innovations in line with the times on the basis of respecting the elements of opera, so they have certain research significance.

2.1 Comparison of visual communication

2.1.1 Character modeling

The core element of the film is the characters, and the film story is about the typical characters in the typical environment. The distinctiveness of characters is the key to setting a good example for movie characters. The example of the drama is centered around the typical characters in the typical environment. All the contradictions and conflicts in the drama are laid out around the characters, and the characters are the core of the drama story narrative. Character modeling is the explicit factor of character visualization, so character modeling is the first key to the audience’s psychology and the bearing of the audience’s aesthetic experience.

In the 1980 edition, the costumes and make-up shapes of the characters in The Legend of the White Snake are all opera costumes. According to the primary and secondary relationship of the characters, the women wear the ancient costume heads to show their identity and the corresponding headdresses. And lady white snake Xiaoqing's modeling changed according to the change of narrative plot.

In the first stage, when lady white snake and Xiaoqing left Mount Emei and came to the world with colorful clouds, they were dressed in fancy clothes, wore ancient costumes and wore rhinestones. Bai Suzhen wears a three-ring bun and is decorated with a positive phoenix, while Xiaoqing wears a double-ring bun and a crooked phoenix. Immediately, the identities of the two supporting roles are clear at a glance, and their personality characteristics are bright and prominent: the white snake is
powerful, old and stable; Green snake is weak, young, lively and clever (Figure 1). In the second stage, when they landed at the West Lake, their costumes turned into a relatively life-like opera. Lady white snake wears a costume with a crooked phoenix, Xiaoqing wears a silver nail with sideburns (Figure 2). The identity of the master and servant of the two people who came to the world can be seen at a glance through the costumes. In the third stage, after lady white snake and Xu Xian got married, their styling emphasized solemnity, and their hair accessories turned into positive phoenix, to show the change of their identity (Figure 3). Stealing immortal grass and flooding Jinshan Mountain belong to the fourth stage. In this stage, Bai and Qing fought to save Xu Xian from stealing immortal grass and flooding Jinshan Mountain. Both of them are special costumes for opera martial arts, wearing capes and helmets, indicating that they have martial arts. Especially the shape of Bai Suzhen, who is all white and a little red on his head, shows lady white snake's courage and determination to save her husband (Figure 4). The last stage is to get married, and Bai and Qing return to their married home style (as shown in Figure 5). The costume modeling of the characters in The Legend of the White Snake assists the development of the plot, and the transition of the drama story is smoothly expressed through the modeling of the characters.

The 2021 edition of "The Legend of the White Snake. Love" has all been redesigned to conform to the aesthetic cognition of modern young people on the basis of retaining the elements of traditional Chinese opera. On the fashion modeling, The Legend of the White Snake. Love pays attention to the fabric of clothing, adopting the ancient technique of "plant blooming", and the characters' clothing has the characteristics of soft and natural color but more antique. In the design and color of clothing, the concrete patterns such as peonies and swallows, which
often appear on costumes, are abandoned. Hand-painted freehand patterns and a thin layer of hand embroidery are used to create a delicate texture, which is integrated with the movie tune and becomes a great highlight of the movie. The Legend of the White Snake. Love makes bold innovations on the hair style and headdress of characters on the basis of keeping the elements of opera. The stickers of lady white snake and Xiaoqing are outlined with real hair, and the overall figure shape shows a light and airy feeling, that is, the traditional opera modeling elements are kept, and the characteristics of realistic movies are also present. The headdresses of lady white snake and Xiaoqing are all knocked out by hand with bronze ware and carefully crafted. All these have played a role in adding color to the film without robbing it.

In terms of specific styling, lady white snake and Xiaoqing have the same style from beginning to end, and their clothes and hairstyles are light and elegant, without losing the essence of the opera, and at the same time, they show their personality characteristics (Figure 6). Among more than 30 kinds of clothes, lady white snake's clothes are always simple and elegant in design and color, the neckline adopts the pattern of lapel, and patches on the head are stacked on each other. lady white snake's dignified and calm figure is quietly constructed. All the clothes in Xiaoqing are mainly green in different tones, with special fabrics dyed by plants and hand-painted colors, while Xiaoqing's patch is slightly tilted to one side compared with lady white snake's. Through the subtle differences in dress modeling, Xiaoqing's fresh and lively image contrasts with lady white snake's elegant and dignified image, and each has its own characteristics. The character modeling in The Legend of the White Snake is an important element of the film, which plays an important role in the plot and undertakes the important task of the visual sense of the film's oriental aesthetics.
2.1.2 Comparison of Scenery Application

In any image, contrast is not simply a neutral boundary; it provides an observation point for the content in the image. In the movie, the reason why the scene parting is important is that it actively defines the image for the audience. Don't influence the audience's cognition of the story by dominating the scope of the lens content.

In the 1980 edition of "The Legend of the White Snake", it was achieved that "while not hindering actors' performances and sealing up the representation of Peking Opera art, we should seek naturalness and credibility, and at the same time, we should highlight the legendary implication, so that this story is not only true and well-founded, but also beautiful and harmonious."[2] The images of narrative lens are mainly medium shot and close shot. Close-up lens is mainly used to express stylized actions and show people's eyes and gestures. At the same time, a large number of horizontal perspectives are used for shooting, which enhances the sense of substitution of the story. The ideographic function of medium and close-range scenes is mainly to narrate stories. Actors' words and deeds are clearly presented through the medium and close-range scenes, and the audience's sight and emotion flow with the changes of actors' sight and emotion.

In 1980's "The Legend of the White Snake", the beginning and end of the story mainly depend on the performances of actors. "At the beginning of the story, Bai Niangzi met Xu Xian on the lakeside of West Lake. The film didn't let Xu Xian appear immediately, but through a series of shots, she showed her expression after seeing Xu Xian to create suspense, which made people wonder why Xu Xian was in her eyes, and subtly conveyed Bai Niangzi's affection for Xu Xian by prolonging the screen time."[3]. In the process of watching the movie again, the characters in the play like the audience, while the characters in the play worry about the audience, and the emotions of the audience are always consistent with those of the characters in the play. The unique charm of traditional Chinese opera art is revealed by the use of unique technical means in movies.

The 2021 edition of "The Legend of the White Snake. Love" runs through the whole film with the charm and special effects of oriental aesthetics, and all the scenes blend together, and people and scenery are integrated. The picture of the film is beautiful and has imagery expression. "The image to be expressed by real art is not the representation of real objects. The aesthetic connotation of the image itself contains the transcendence of everyday objects. It is the blending and infiltration of the life color under the subjective consciousness and the objective original ecological scene, which reveals the deep meaning behind the deepest representation in perceptual form."[4] The film uses a large number of panoramic and long-range shots, and at the same time, it is shot at a slightly depressed angle, which brings a brand-new
perspective of God to the audience. The audience can not only feel the main story line of people, scenery and feelings through the big scene, but also have an objective distance from the film with the characteristics of opera. When watching, the audience's senses, feelings and minds are aroused and moved with the plot, and at the same time they can make judgments and cognition according to their own experiences, and make personalized understanding and understanding of the characters.

The film should not only keep the aesthetic feeling and characteristics of the drama, but also perfectly show the unique charm of film technology to meet the aesthetic needs of contemporary young people. One of the important innovative elements of the film, the treatment of "Water Flooding the Golden Mountain", takes into account the fictitious, stylized and comprehensive artistic characteristics of the drama and the visual impact of the film art to the audience. In addition to special effects, panoramic, mid-range, close-up and close-up are used interactively in the performance of big waves. The close-up shows the water vapor and fog in the water waves, and the panoramic, medium and close-up scenes show the boundless magic and subjective emotions of the characters. The combination of reality and reality shows the unique oriental implication beauty.

2.1.3 Comparison of special effects

As a 'wonder', film is a product of high technology in essence. "Moving plots and various visual special effects are the most eye-catching parts of the movie. From the catharsis of feelings to the pursuit of visual wonders on the screen, people are motivated to watch movies. With the support of modern technology, the core technique of creating visual wonders is to use movie special effects, which can't be seen in daily life. The imagination of all mankind is realized in movies with the help of visual special effects. Special effects have become the primary tool for showing different scenes of movies, providing an important means for film creation and expanding the public's vision."[5]

The special effects in the 1980 edition of "The Legend of the White Snake" made use of montage editing, multi-angle shooting and technical means to vividly show the mysterious story stage background with a strong visual impact, which enhanced the aesthetic feeling of the opera and extended the space for its development. At that time, it was highly praised by the audience. Some people say that "The Legend of the White Snake has the largest number of special effects shots since the founding of the People's Republic of China." In the opening of the film, when the white snake and the green snake came to Mount Emei, they created the effect of their falling from the sky in the form of spray and hanging wire. At the end of the story, Xiaoqing avenged lady white snake, and the raging fire gushed out of the gourd and Fahai died in the fire. At the same time, the collapsed Leifeng Tower shocked the audience greatly. Although there is no qualitative innovation in the special effects in The
Legend of the White Snake compared with the present, the past special effects experience has been continued and deepened in the development of China films.

In 2021, White Snake made full use of modern film technology to innovate in presenting the cinematic feeling of drama stories. The production team made full use of audio-visual technologies such as movie special effects and 4K panoramic sound to show the magical imagination of the story with magnificent visual wonders full of oriental aesthetic pictures, and brought China traditional opera into the era of blockbusters. "The director guides the audience to pay attention to the most important places in the picture through modern technical means, and at the same time arouses the audience's interest through passion, curiosity and suspense."[6] The special effects in White Snake have built a bridge from freehand brushwork to realism in the whole film, and the expression of traditional oriental freehand brushwork shows the texture of fantasy blockbusters by special effects. For example, the element of "water flooding Jinshan", which can best reflect the texture of special effects in the film, combines the contrast system of light and shadow in western aesthetics, and at the same time integrates the form, spirit and charm of eastern aesthetics, adding water vapor and fog between the water waves, and enhancing the truth of the big waves. The texture of the picture shows the characteristics of eight real points and two imaginary points, which fully shows the characteristics of eastern aesthetics in fiction and fact.

2.2 Comparison of auditory communication

Music plays an important role in traditional Chinese opera movies. The focus of traditional Chinese opera movies is how to use audio-visual language to show traditional Chinese opera music. The complex relationship between the two is one of the focuses that creators need to explore when shooting traditional Chinese opera movies. "Opera films must first be faithful to the actors' performance, singing, dialogue, posture, including the actors' achievement methods, and must faithfully present the performing arts without damaging it. How to fully embody the actor's art in the film and leave a very precious and valuable material for the drama itself and the inheritance of future art is an important positioning."[7]

The 1980 edition of "The Legend of the White Snake", in the performance of opera music, basically followed the characteristics of the stylized performance of Peking Opera opera stage, and at the same time made an attempt in the performance mode. For example, in the paragraph where Xu Xian exhorts the white snake to realgar wine, the director uses the window frame in the foreground to limit the performance of the actors, resulting in the effect of watching the stage performance. Through the ingenious location, the actors show the aesthetic advantages of Beijing Opera in "singing, reading and doing'
according to the style of the opera stage performance. The innovation of
the opera also makes "The Legend of the White Snake" better show the
plot and express emotion through the opera aria, which arouses the
audience's resonance. When the white snake asked Xiaoqing before
stealing grass, the director boldly adjusted the stage performance that
had been asked and turned to leave the scene to "a complicated figure
of repeatedly looking back, repeatedly bowing sleeves, and finally
kneeling on both knees"[8], which completed the transition between
tunes and tones. "Take performance as a bridge, turn stage art into film
art, and realize a new aesthetic of artistic works".[9]

The 2021 edition of "The Legend of the White Snake. Love" has made a
brand-new arrangement in the treatment of opera music. "Modern
audiences are more and more sensitive to the sound in movies. Since
the early 1990s, digital sound effects have become one of the necessary
conditions for movies to attract audiences."[10]In a sense, The Legend of
the White Snake. Love in 2021 is an opera song and dance film. The
melody, rhythm, rhythm, harmony and the use of musical instruments in
the film all stimulate and affect the audience's emotional response. At
the same time, "the musical melody or phrase is also closely connected
with the actor's role and background."[11]Therefore, in the transmission
of auditory elements, the film not only restores the classical aria in the
opera stage, but also borrows the orchestral music from western music,
neutralizing the partial sound quality of bangzi and gongs and drums in
opera music. For example, lady white snake used cello, viola, violin,
string and wind music in western music when playing against Lohan in
Jinshan Temple. Through these elements of western music, the subtle
emotions of the actors were brought out, and the actors' performances
were progressive and delicate with the help of music. In the scene of
"Water Flooding the Golden Mountain", electronic music sound effects
and traditional Chinese opera music are fully combined, and the lyrics
and aria are innovated according to the aria of the musical, and a lot of
changes are made between long and short sentences, which adds
auditory support to the magnificent special effects scene.

3 results
In this paper, through the comparative analysis of China's 1980 edition
of White Snake and 2021 edition of White Snake, the author analyzes
and compares the shooting background and the specific expressive
means of audio-visual language of the two films, comprehensively sorts
out the basic characteristics of the two opera films and the relationship
between them, and finds that the development of China's opera films
has a positive effect on the spread of traditional opera art. Therefore,
this paper draws the following conclusions:
First of all, as far as visual communication is concerned, the characters in the 1980 edition are mainly in the form of stage operas; The 2021 edition, combining the aesthetic characteristics of young people at present, removes the heavy sense of stage from the hairstyle, hair accessories, makeup and clothing, takes the opera art as the core and the film expression means as the extension, and makes the characters light, life-oriented, fresh and refined, aesthetic, with traditional beauty without losing the sense of modernity. In addition, in the application of scenery, the scenery in the 1989 edition is mainly story-telling scenery (medium and close-range), assisted by close-ups, revealing the characters' hearts. However, for the film, the highlight of live shooting is adopted, and due to a large number of medium and close-range scenes, it does not well reflect the effect that people and scenes complement each other. The biggest artistic feature of the 2021 edition of "The Legend of the White Snake. Love" is that it adopts the shooting method of big scenes, with the help of close-ups and the integration of people and scenes. People are a part of the scene, and the scene is the outlet of love, and it also enables the audience to understand the delicate performances through the close-ups on the screen. At the same time, the use of big scenes pays attention to the blank space in the picture composition, and constructs the effect of ink painting. "The white space can be considered as the calling structure of western art theory, and it is also an aesthetic collision innovation of the combination of western films and China operas"[12]. Finally, in terms of movie special effects, due to the progress of technology, the special effects of the 2021 edition have enhanced the appreciation, enriched the audience's aesthetic experience and met the viewing needs of consumers.

In terms of auditory communication, the 1980 edition basically respects the stage art, and makes use of the film media to present the original appearance of the content completely. The 2021 version of Cantonese Opera Qupai aria has been refined and modified to form a modern stage language form acceptable to young audiences. The creator has well protected the tone of Lingnan Drama, and introduced western music skills, thus making the past serve the present and making foreign things serve China. As Balazs Bela said: "The simplest narrative editing (the only purpose of which is to arrange multiple images into enough paragraphs to elaborate the plot of the film according to the narrative process) is to create an art."[13]

4 Conclusions

Generally speaking, although the shooting technique of the 1980 edition of The Legend of the White Snake was valuable in that year, it made a breakthrough in both narrative content and expressive means. Through film technology, the stage performance of the opera was completely and vividly re-created, which retained the stylized characteristics of the
opera performance. The combination of virtual performances of characters in the real-life environment brought a refreshing visual effect, which had the aesthetic characteristics of the times. However, the application of audio-visual elements still belonged to the conventional artistic expression means of movies.

The 2021 edition of "The Legend of the White Snake. Love" is bold and innovative, and it has made an attempt to conform to the characteristics of the times and have the characteristics of traditional art both visually and audibly. In the movie, the makeup, headdress and costume of the actors become special tools to create roles, convey emotions and strengthen narratives, and they are also important elements to promote the progress of the plot[14]. The shooting of the lens and the scheduling of the scene are greatly used. The strong changes of the external environment have increased the dramatic power of important scenes and greatly enhanced the dramatic effect of the whole film. The director chose an elegant arch bridge, an empty temple and a raging lake for the scenes of the characters' meeting and fighting in the play, which not only met the audience's visual demand for the whole scene, but also symbolized the characters' small but struggling mental state in reality. This aesthetic change, which conforms to the characteristics of the times, has a strong reference significance for the integration and development of China opera and film, at the same time, it provides more possibilities for China Cantonese opera to be filmed, and contributes to the inheritance and development of China traditional culture in the new era.

Bibliography

[8] The riverLooking at the white snake under the mercury lamp


